



**A**s a steward of our nation's coastal and marine environments, NOAA addresses immediate and long-term environmental threats through its Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R). Scientists are on call around-the-clock to provide the U.S. Coast Guard and other emergency responders with critical information to help minimize environmental damage caused by oil and hazardous chemical spills. Environmental experts assess ecosystems compromised by historic or ongoing contamination and work with other organizations to conduct remediation, restoration, and monitoring of critical natural resources.

### Protecting and Restoring Washington's Coastal and Marine Areas

NOAA trust resources in Washington include federally threatened and endangered Pacific salmon and steelhead, as well as Washington state species of concern, which include rockfish, herring, cod, hake, and pollock. Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca are important breeding areas for harbor seals, seasonal foraging areas for California sea lions, and foraging and migration routes for several other species of marine mammals. The state map on the reverse page shows key response and restoration activities in the past year.

### Emergency Response

The *Empress of the North*, a 360-foot cruise ship, ran aground in the Columbia River near Washougal in March 2006. In preparation for re-floating, approximately 20,000



*Empress of the North*, photo courtesy US Coast Guard

gallons of diesel fuel were removed from the vessel. NOAA's OR&R provided on-scene support to prevent environmental damage during the transfer process.

### Assessment and Restoration

Commencement Bay near Tacoma was severely contaminated by shipbuilding, oil refining, and other industrial activities beginning in the late 1800s. Covering over 12 square miles, the impacted area includes critical habitat for anadromous species such as salmon. NOAA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have worked together since 1986 to investigate the extent of contamination and plan cleanup and monitoring operations to minimize ecosystem impact. Settlements with more than 50 responsible parties have been completed to restore injured natural resources. Sixteen projects are completed or currently underway to restore and preserve more than 200 acres.



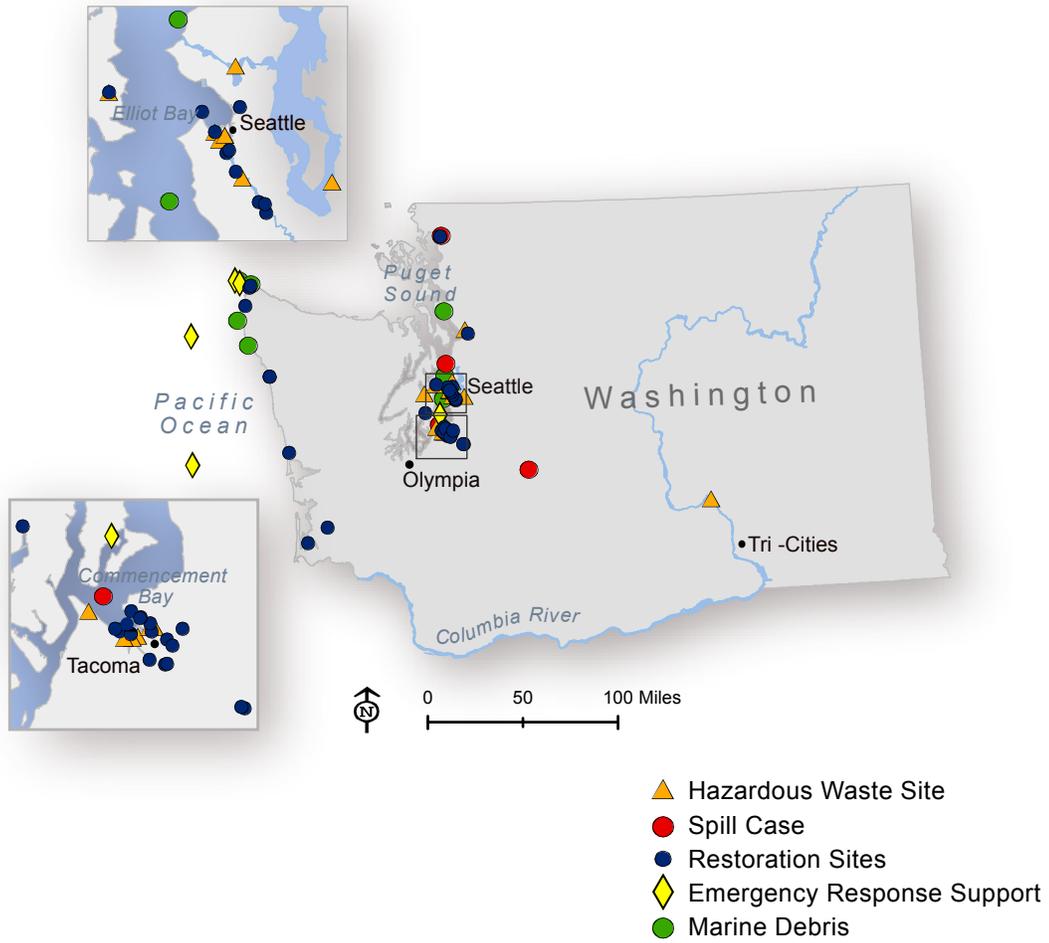
*Commencement Bay*

### Marine Debris

The Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary worked with tribal and sanctuary staff, NOAA fisheries, and local residents to identify priority areas for derelict fishing gear removal. The NOAA dive program in Seattle trained commercial Makah divers in safe removal procedures.

### Research

NOAA collaborates with other federal, state, and local programs to develop innovative approaches to protecting marine and estuarine environments through research and synthesis of information. The Coastal Response Research Center (CRRCC) brings together the resources of a research-oriented university and the field expertise of OR&R to conduct and oversee basic and applied research, conduct outreach, and encourage strategic partnerships in spill response, assessment, and restoration.




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*NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration—Protecting our Coastal Environment*

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**For further information about NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration,  
 please call (301) 713-2989 or visit our Web site at  
[response.restoration.noaa.gov](http://response.restoration.noaa.gov)**

*Banner photo of Deception Pass, Washington, courtesy of Maud Walsh*

